

Message Text

PAGE 01 DOHA 00112 290629Z

15

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-07 SP-02 L-01

PM-03 DODE-00 RSC-01 CIAE-00 PRS-01 H-01 EB-03 EUR-08

/053 W

----- 075368

P R 280934Z JAN 75 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 136
COMIDEASTFOR PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0112

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK AND OTHER MILITARY
ADDRESSEES AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : OCLR PFOR MPOL QA US

SUBJECT : GOV'T OF QATAR DECIDES AGAINST PERMITTING US
NAVAL VISIT

REFS: DOHA 55 (NOTAL); DOHA 59

1. SUMMARY: GOQ HAS DECIDED AGAINST PERMITTING REQUESTED FEB 24-26
VISIT OF COMIDEASTFOR FLAG SHIP, USS LA SALLE. ACCORDING COMMANDER-
IN-CHIEF OF QATARI ARMED FORCES, DECISION BASED ON UNFAVORABLE
ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY RECENT US STATEMENTS ABOUT POSSIBLE INTER-
VENTION IN AREA AND OTHER RELATED US ACTIONS. BELIEVE IT WOULD BE
INADVISABLE TO PRESS ISSUE FURTHER AT THIS TIME. SINCE GOQ DOES
NOT RPT NOT WISH TO GIVE US FORMAL REFUSAL, FOR RECORD AND COSMETIC
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DOHA 00112 290629Z

PURPOSES, WE WILL WITHDRAW OUR CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR LA SALLE
VISIT. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER REPEATED REQUESTS TO FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR REPLY TO OUR

NOTE REQUESTING CLEARANCE FOR VISIT OF USS LA SALLE FEB 24-26, WE WERE ADVISED TO TAKE MATTER UP DIRECTLY WITH SHAYKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL THANI, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF QATARI ARMED FORCES, WHO IS ALSO AMIR'S OLDEST SON. ON EVENING JAN 27 I CALLED ON SHAYKH HAMAD AND ASKED ABOUT OUR CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR LA SALLE.

3. SHAYKH HAMAD REMINDED ME OF OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION DURING WHICH HE HAD RAISED QUESTION ABOUT ADVISABILITY OF LA SALLE VISIT IN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE (DOHA 59). HE SAID, AS HE HAD PROMISED, HE HAD DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH THE AMIR WHO HAD CONFIRMED HAMAD'S JUDGMENT THAT VISIT INADVISABLE AT THIS TIME. HAMAD ASSERTED THAT AGAINST BACKGROUND OF SECRETARY'S STATEMENT IN BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW ABOUT POSSIBLE INTERVENTION IN THIS AREA, WHICH STATEMENT SUBSEQUENTLY HAD BEEN REPEATED AND CONFIRMED A NUMBER OF TIMES NOT ONLY BY SECRETARY BUT BY PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, US NAVAL SHIP VISIT HERE WOULD PUT GOQ IN AWKWARD POSITION VIS-A-VIS DOMESTIC AND ARAB PUBLIC OPINION. HAMAD INDICATED THAT CURRENT PUBLIC FUROR OVER US REQUEST FOR FACILITIES ON MASIRAH ISLAND AND CANARD RE ALLEGED US FORMATION OF THREE DIVISIONS FOR SERVICE IN MID EAST, PLUS RECENT OPEC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS AND FURTHER OPEC MINISTERIAL AND SUMMIT MEETINGS PLANNED FOR LATE FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH, WERE BOUND TO KEEP POT BOILING ON ALLEGED US INTERVENTION THREATS IN AREA. IT WAS IN THIS ATMOSPHERE THAT GOQ WOULD HAVE TO ANSWER TO QATARI PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS FOR ITS PERMISSION FOR US NAVAL VISIT, AND THIS HAD BROUGHT GOQ TO DECISION THAT LA SALLE VISIT INADVISABLE.

3. HAMAD SAID THAT HE, THE AMIR AND OTHER GOQ OFFICIALS APPRECIATED US EXPLANATIONS RE RECENT STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS, BUT FIRST IMPRESSIONS WERE LASTING ONES AND UNFAVORABLE TO US, PARTICULARLY IN PUBLIC FORUM. HAMAD STATED THAT HE COULD NOT RPT NOT RULE OUT SUBVERSIVE-INSPIRED HOSTILE DEMONSTRATIONS IN DOHA IF LA SALLE VISITED, AND HE BELIEVED THIS COULD HARM US/GOQ RELATIONS. HE BELIEVED THAT GOQ'S FRANK AND FRIENDLY COUNSEL FOR LA SALLE TO STAY AWAY AT THIS TIME WOULD BE BEST FOR ALL CONCERNED.
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DOHA 00112 290629Z

4. I EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH GOQ ATTITUDE WHICH INDICATED THAT ANTI-US PROPAGANDA IN AREA INSTIGATED BY ENEMIES OF GOQ AS WELL AS US, HAD DONE ITS JOB WELL. HAMAD REPLIED THAT US STATEMENTS HAD GIVEN ANTI-US FORCES THEIR OPPORTUNITY. I ANSWERED THAT LA SALLE VISIT WOULD DEMONSTRATE, DESPITE HOSTILE PROPAGANDA, GOQ'S UNDERSTANDING OF REAL MEANING AND INTENTION OF US PRESENCE IN AREA AS FORCE FOR STABILITY. HAMAD RESPONDED THAT GOQ COULD NOT RPT NOT IGNORE EXTERNAL AND PUBLICLY UNDERSTOOD IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT US STATEMENTS, ITS PERCEPTION OF EX POST FACTO EXPLANATIONS NOTWITHSTANDING. HE SAID HIS FRANKNESS WITH ME INDICATIVE OF SOLID BASIS OF US/GOQ RELATIONS SINCE ONLY FRIENDS COULD BE SO CANDID. GOQ DECISION DICTATED

BY ITS OWN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT AND NOT INTENDED TO MAR ITS EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH US. HE SAID DECISION SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BECOME ISSUE BETWEEN US AND SINCE MATTER NOT RPT NOT IN PUBLIC DOMAIN IT NEED NEVER SURFACE AS PROBLEM OR EMBARRASSMENT BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. HE ASKED FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOQ'S SITUATION.

5. I SAID THAT I DID UNDERSTAND GOQ'S SITUATION BUT DID NOT RPT NOT AGREE THAT IT LEADS TO DECIDED COURSE OF ACTION. I FOUND IT IRONIC THAT IRAQIS, WHO GOQ FEARED WERE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SUBVERSION HERE, HAD HAD NAVAL VISIT LATE LAST YEAR. HAMAD REPLIED THAT GOQ COULD NOT REFUSE IRAQ SINCE IT FELLOW ARAB COUNTRY AND ITS SHIPS HAD VISITED ALL OTHER GULF STATES. HE SAID GOQ HAD MADE ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD IRAQ CLEAR DURING VISIT BY FACT THAT NEITHER HE NOR ANY OTHER SENIOR QATARI OFFICIAL HAD ATTENDED ANY OF FUNCTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH IRAQI NAVAL VISIT, AND THIS WAS PUBLIC INDICATION OF QATARI DISFAVOR TOWARD PRESENT GOI. I NOTED THAT US SHIPS TOO CALLED FREQUENTLY AT OTHER GULF PORTS AND INDEED WERE PROVIDED FACILITIES IN BAHRAIN. HAMAD COUNTERED THAT HE WAS NOT RPT NOT AWARE OF ANY US NAVAL VISITS SINCE SECRETARY'S AND SUBSEQUENT STATEMENTS FROM OTHER USG OFFICIALS ON POSSIBLE INTERVENTION IN AREA. I ALSO EXPRESSED GREAT SKEPTICISM ABOUT DANGER OF DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST LA SALLE IN DOHA, SAYING IT HAD BEEN MY IMPRESSION THAT SECURITY SITUATION HERE COMPLETELY UNDER CONTROL. HAMAD SAID THAT NUISANCE POTENTIAL OF A FEW SUBVERSIVES SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED. IN ANY CASE, THE MAJOR CONCERN OF GOQ WAS TO PREEMPT CAUSE OF POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 DOHA 00112 290629Z

BY ADVISING AGAINST LA SALLE VISIT.

6. HAMAD REITERATED THAT HE DID NOT WISH THIS MATTER TO BECOME ISSUE BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS. I SUGGESTED THAT MATTER BE REVIEWED AGAIN WITH AMIR. HE SAID THAT HE COULD DO THIS OR I COULD DO IT MYSELF, BUT HE STRONGLY ADVISED AGAINST THIS COURSE OF ACTION. HE SAID AMIR'S DISPLEASURE WITH US STATEMENTS HAD BEEN CLEARLY CONVEYED DURING SENATOR PERCY'S VISIT (DOHA 46), AND THAT OTHER ARAB MODERATES SUCH AS SADAT AND SAUDIS HAD ALSO SPOKEN OUT STRONGLY ON ISSUE. ACCORDING HAMAD, ALTHOUGH MODERATE ARAB VIEWS PRINCIPAL BENCHMARK FOR QATARIS, THEY COULD NOT IGNORE RAVINGS OF RADICALS SUCH AS ALGERIANS, LIBYANS AND IRAQIS, AND EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO GENERAL ARAB CRITICISM BY PERMITTING US SHIP VISIT IN THIS HIGHLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE.

7. I REPEATED TO HAMAD MY DISAPPOINTMENT OVER GOQ ATTITUDE BUT SAID THAT I WOULD RELUCTANTLY ACCEPT HIS ADVICE NOT TO PRESS ISSUE FURTHER. I TOLD HIM I WOULD OF COURSE BE REPORTING GOQ'S DECISION AND HIS REMARKS IN DETAIL TO MY GOVERNMENT. HE REPLIED THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HE WISHED SINCE THE USG SHOULD HAVE A VERY CLEAR PICTURE OF THE IMPACT OF ITS RECENT STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS ON ITS FRIENDS IN THIS AREA.

8. COMMENT: LA SALLE'S NON-VISIT IS CLEARLY CASUALTY OF SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW AND SUBSEQUENT STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS INTERPRETED AS CONFIRMING US INTERVENTION INTENTIONS IN THIS AREA. I BELIEVE QATARIS SINCERELY WISH TO BELIEVE OUR EXPLANATIONS BUT WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DISPEL THEIR DOUBTS AND SUSPICIONS OF OUR TRUE INTENTIONS, AND PROGRESSION OF EVENTS IN PAST FEW WEEKS HAS DONE NOTHING TO ALLAY THESE SUSPICIONS. GOQ IS WONDERING AND APPREHENSIVE ABOUT WHAT OUR NEXT SURPRISE WILL BE IN THIS REGION. I AM TOO.

9. COMMENT CONTINUED: ON IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF SHIP VISIT, AS INDICATED ABOVE, I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEPRESS FURTHER. GOQ TYPICALLY WANTS TO KEEP ITS HEAD DOWN. ALTHOUGH I HAVE CONSIDERED GOING OVER HAMAD'S HEAD TO THE AMIR, I THINK THIS WOULD BE A VAIN AND COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND. IT IS UN-REALISTIC TO EXPECT QATARIS TO STAND UP FOR WHAT WE SAY IS TRUE; EVEN THOUGH THEY WANT TO BELIEVE IT, THEY DON'T. SINCE IT IS
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 DOHA 00112 290629Z

INDICATED THAT GOQ DOES NOT WISH TO GIVE US A FORMAL REFUSAL, FOR COSMETIC AND RECORD PURPOSES, WE WILL SEND NOTE TO FOREIGN MINISTRY WITHDRAWING LA SALLE CLEARANCE REQUEST CITING "CHANGED OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS". THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OFFICIALS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ARMED FORCES WHO ARE AWARE OF OUR PENDING REQUEST, AND OUR INITIATIVE IN WITHDRAWING IT WILL PROVIDE A THIN BUT PLAUSIBLE COVER FOR GOQ'S TURNDOWN.
PAGANELLI

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PORT CALLS, MILITARY VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DOHA00112
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750032-0564
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750189/baaaauvx.tel
Line Count: 196
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <26 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: OCLR, PFOR, MPOL, QA, US
To: STATE
COMIDEASTFOR INFO ABU DHABI
KUWAIT
JIDDA
MANAMA
MUSCAT

TEHRAN

Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006